

OLD SLEUTH'S OWN.

No. 109.

Tom The Young Explorer;

OR,

A MAGNIFICENT REWARD.

A TALE TO READ.

By **OLD SLEUTH.**



“Don’t Tell Adout Knocking Anyone Down, My Friend.”

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J. S. OGILVIE PUBLISHING COMPANY,
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TOM THE YOUNG EXPLORER; OR, A MAGNIFICENT REWARD.

A TALE TO READ.

BY OLD SLEUTH,

Author of All the Famous Old Sleuth Stories.

CHAPTER I.

A TERRIBLE CHARGE—A DOUBTING CAPTAIN OF POLICE—IN A CELL—A VISITOR—THE MAN WITH THE SHREWD FACE—“I’LL DIE FIRST”—A STRAIGHT TALE OF THE UNDERDRIFT OF LIFE.

“Captain, I am innocent!”

“How is that, officer, have you arrested an innocent young man?”

"No, captain, I reckon you know that a guilty man was never 'raked in.' All these fellows are innocent, and besides, I have respectable witnesses who will swear to this young criminal's guilt."

The police captain had a sad look upon his face. Before him stood a fine athletic youth of eighteen, handsome in face, strong of limb, and a picture of perfect health, and the youth also signified his intelligence and good breeding in his manner of speech and general bearing.

"This lad does not look like a criminal," said the captain; "is it not possible that there is some mistake?"

"No, sir; I will produce several witnesses at court, and also several detectives who will swear that this fellow is a burglar—a regular professional—the companion of criminals. I will produce the young woman on whom he has spent his stolen money. She is repentant and will swear to his identity."

During the above statement the youth stood pale but firm, and there was a look of surprise upon his face; and standing beside the police captain, who was sitting at the desk, was a shrewd-faced man who fixed his clear, intelligent glance upon the youth, and evidently was reading him through and through. The shrewd-faced man whispered something to the captain of police, and the latter said:

"I am not a police justice and of course I will be compelled to send the youth down to a cell, but I say frankly I doubt his guilt, and I hope he will be able to prove his innocence."

The prisoner here spoke up, and said:

"Captain, if the officer is telling the truth I cannot prove my innocence. My arrest was a surprise to me; I never stole anything in my life; I never associated with

criminals. I am a stranger in this city. I cannot prove my innocence; I can only swear to the truth, and I never lied in my life."

"You are certain, officer, that you have arrested the right man?"

"Yes, captain, he was fully identified before I arrested him. He entered a house on Twentieth Street; the owner of the house was aroused, and having an electric light he flashed up the light and fully identified the intruder. This fellow had the man's watch and chain in his hands at the moment, and he fired a shot at the gentleman and then ran. The case was reported at headquarters, and the gentleman who was robbed accompanied me when searching for this fellow, and pointed him out to me down on West Street, and at the moment he was talking with one of the most notorious burglars in the city, a man who has only been three days out of Sing Sing. This latter fact I can swear to myself, and several men, as I said, identified him, and I took him to the young woman, and she swore to his identity as Fred Goodman."

Here the young man spoke up and said:

"Captain, that proves my innocence, for my name is not Fred Goodman."

"What is your name—your real name?"

The youth hesitated a moment and appeared lost in thought, and then answered:

"I will not tell my real name. The chances are all against me, and my name would go back to my native town of Boston, and I would be forever disgraced. No, captain, under the circumstances, I cannot tell my real name."

The captain, for reasons that will be disclosed later on, did not urge the youth to disclose his real name, and

put him on the "blotter" as Fred Goodman, and as he did so he remarked:

"Young man, I have no option in the matter; I will have to put you in a cell. No doubt you can prove an alibi despite the weight of evidence that appears to be arrayed against you—I hope you can." Then turning to the doorman, the captain said:

"Take him downstairs."

The arrest had been made by the ward detective of the precinct, a man who had been recently appointed to the position, and who was anxious to distinguish himself, and we will add in justice to the young detective that his statement, to the best of his knowledge and belief, was the truth, and herein lay the complication which led to the incidents which we are about to record.

Under the name of Fred Goodman the accused youth was led below stairs and placed in a cell. He betrayed no signs of fear, but there was a look of despair upon his fine and really handsome face. Still, as stated, he maintained a resolute manner, and made no protest as he was led down to be placed in a cell. As our readers will recall, a shrewd-faced man stood beside the captain of police and critically surveyed the youth. The man indicated said nothing to the accused, but his face was very expressive.

Once in the cell the prisoner sat down on the iron cot, buried his face in his hands, and muttered:

"Well, this ends it all; I will be sent to prison, come out with a stigma upon my name, and ruined for life. Under these circumstances what is the use of living. I am innocent, but oftentimes innocent men are sent to prison. The circumstances are strange indeed, I don't understand it. That officer who arrested me evidently told the truth from his view of it, and here I am accused of bur-

glary. Friendless and alone in a great city, and cumulative evidence piled up against me that would send a half-dozen men to prison."

For a long time the youth sat motionless in the attitude he had assumed after being first left alone, but finally he muttered again :

"I will not give up yet; as adverse incidents turned against me, so fortunate ones may come my way yet, but if I am condemned and sentenced that ends it. I will never go to State's prison to serve a term. Self-murder may be a crime, but I am innocent. I will risk an excuse for my deed; I will never go to jail under sentence. My name is not known; I will never give it. I am unknown and I will be as one lost. I have no father or mother to mourn, and Kate is young and in time will forget me—yes, let me see, I may manage to have the news conveyed to her that I am dead. She may mourn awhile, but time assuages to a certain degree all griefs, but rarely disgrace. Once branded as a convict and I will be a marked man for life. This is a good world, but there is an underdrift of hardness and an overdrift of good fortune and kindness; I am in the underdrift; everything is going against me. All my hopes and ambitions are snuffed out under one fell blow, but it is a mystery. Strange that I should be arrested. I might prove an alibi—yes, that is possible, but there are reasons why I dare not attempt it. I would be compelled to give my real name—and I might fail. Better take the other chances, for it looks as though I would be convicted anyhow. I have no money for the summoning of witnesses. But it is strange that girl should swear against me, and yet when I was presented to her she swore positively that I was Fred Goodman. That testimony I can never overcome—and yet she looked like an

innocent girl despite the fact that she affirmed a falsehood. There is a mystery here—a deep mystery—I cannot solve; it but I will never go to prison as a convict. Here I am resolved, I'll die first—yes, die by my own hand."

As the youth uttered the last thought he spoke audibly, and the next instant was aroused by hearing the key turned in the iron door. He glanced up and beheld the shrewd-faced man whom he had seen talking to the police captain at the time the officer arraigned him, "the prisoner," before the captain's desk.

The visitor, for so the shrewd-faced gentleman proved, opened the iron door, stepped within the cell, and said:

"So you will kill yourself, eh?"

"Yes, I will; I did not intend any one should overhear my threat, but that is my determination. I will never go to prison under sentence as a convict. I am innocent. The chances are against me I know. I can't help it. I am in the underdrift, and if convicted I'd go way under and rise no more."

"See here, young fellow, it may not be as bad as you think."

"Yes, it is bad enough."

"What is your real name?"

"I'll never tell."

"Have you a reason for not telling?"

"Yes."

"What is your reason?"

"My home is in Boston. The chances are against me. It shall never be known among my former friends that I am a convict."

"Are your parents living?"

"No."

"Both dead?"

"Yes, I am an orphan; I've been an orphan since I was twelve years old."

"Suppose you tell me all about yourself?"

"Why should I do so?"

"It may prove to your advantage."

"To my advantage?"

"Yes."

"How?"

"We will talk that over later on."

"I'll tell you my history, but I will not tell my name. My father was a salesman in a large house in Boston; my mother was the daughter of a farmer living in New Hampshire. She was an orphan and school-teacher, and strange to say my father did not know of any living relatives, so he said. We were well-to-do; my mother took great interest in my education and became my instructor until the time of her death, and having such a kind teacher I made great progress. I was between twelve and thirteen when my father and mother started to pay a visit to my mother's native town. There came a railway accident, both my parents were killed, somehow I escaped. My father had not been able to save any money from his salary—indeed, at the time of his death he possessed nothing, not even household furniture. My mother was not a woman of robust health and my father never began housekeeping. I was taken back to Boston; I did not know that I had a living relative, but I was experienced beyond my years. I knew I had lived in Boston all my life, and was well acquainted with the ways of the world—yes, as I said, far beyond my years. I was resolute, and being friendless started out to make my way in the world; and, alas! here I am. I've landed in a cell under a charge of burglary."

CHAPTER II.

A DETECTIVE'S KIND INTEREST IN A PRISONER—A STORY WITH A LITTLE ROMANCE IN IT—A GIFT FROM AN ENEMY—THE MEAL SENT BY THE GIRL WHO HAD DONE THE REAL HARM—A DOORMAN'S POSSIBILITIES.

THE shrewd-faced man, who, as it afterward proved, was a regular detective, listened to the lad's story patiently, and when the lad made the sad statement, "Here I am landed in a cell," the detective retorted: "Don't despair yet, young fellow, there is lots of grit in you, and you may rise to the top pinnacle yet."

"Never."

"Oh, yes."

"Don't you see, sir?"

"See what?"

"The chances are all against me; I don't understand it, but it does look as though I'd be railroaded without a single chance turning in my favor."

"Oh, yes; the chances have turned in your favor already; but go on and tell me the rest of your story."

"There is not much more to tell. I have been boot-black, newsboy, and clerk. You see, I boarded in a house with a widow; she has a lovely daughter. I'll tell you, sir, because I have no one else to talk to."

"Yes, tell me all."

"I was a clerk and I fell in love with the widow's daughter. She is a lovely girl and her mother has striven hard to give her a good education. She is very beautiful—when I say beautiful I mean it. Her name is Kate; her mother had hard luck and I loaned her all my money from time to time until I hadn't a cent left; then

the firm I was with failed and they owed me some money. I was left penniless; I talked it over with Kate. There was no chance for me in Boston. Times are hard, you know that, and I determined to come on here to New York, hoping to have a better chance, and if I failed here I intended to make my way out West. I landed in New York a few days ago, and here I am with the prospect of going to prison as a convict—but I never will. I am sorry for Kate and her mother. Kate was to wait for me until I made enough money for us to get married, but all our hopes are blasted now. Poor Kate! she shall learn that I am dead, that's all—and may kind Providence bring her better fortune. I will not dwell on my suffering and despair at this moment. I will say for myself that I am resolute, but I am heart-broken all the same."

"Your case may not be as hopeless as you think. I am glad you told your story and I believe every word you have told me; and now tell me about your being arrested."

"Do you believe I am innocent?"

"I can tell you better after you have related to me your adventures here in New York."

"There is not much to tell about my adventures in New York. I have sought for a situation here, sir, and I have found affairs about as bad as they are in Boston. To-day I met a man on West Street; I had never seen him before in all my life. He was a very pleasant-spoken man and asked me a great many questions. I told him I was looking for a position, and he said he knew a friend of his who wanted a good young man. While I was talking the officer came up and arrested me. I was never more surprised in all my life; I thought at first it was a joke and that he had taken me for some one else. He made me go with him. Still believing it to be a mistake I walked along with him. He took me to a

house where there was a very pretty, innocent-looking girl. He asked her who I was, and she said my name was Fred Goodman, and that she and I were great friends. It almost took my breath away, for I had never seen the girl before in all my life. The officer led me to the station. You were present and know what followed; and here I am, and I've told you the truth. Do you believe I have?"

"I can't say now—I must think the matter over and investigate a little. I am inclined to believe that you have told me the truth. I can prove your words, however, and if I find out you are really innocent I may do you a good turn yet, so do not despair altogether; in the end you know the right will always prevail."

"Yes, but if it prevails after I am sent to jail it will do me no good."

"I reckon if you have told the truth the right will assert itself. And now mark my words: I want your promise that you will abide until you see me again. Do not do yourself any harm, do not despair, just take things as they come, and all may come out right in the end."

"When will I see you again?"

"I cannot tell you now; you may not see me until after you have been in court. You will not be tried to-morrow; the justice will merely hold a preliminary examination, and possibly hold you for the grand jury unless something shall turn up in your favor. Now mark my words: if a man, a lawyer, comes to you in the court and says 'I represent Mr. Brice,' you be guided by him and do just as he says, except that you need not give your real name. You can tell all your story except that part of it about Kate, in case he tells you to do so. If the judge insists upon your giving your real name give a false one; that is, your middle name as your last name; and

now, young man, I can say this much to you: be hopeful, don't give up just yet, not until you get the prison clothes on you."

"I'll never put them on, I'll swear to that."

"Well, keep up your spirits until the judge tells you that you are guilty."

The detective went away and the young prisoner who had been walking around the city for hours without anything to eat lay down on his cot and took a nap, and he did not arouse until he felt a hand on his shoulder. He started up and beheld the turnkey.

"Here, young man, I've brought you something to eat."

The youth rubbed his eyes and beheld a little layout of food, more than he had enjoyed in a long time. As he glanced at the food, he said:

"Hello, if this is the way you feed prisoners, I don't know but I'd like to stay here."

The turnkey laughed, and said:

"Well, young fellow, you are in luck, that's all. A young girl brought this food here, and she wants to come down and see you."

"A young girl?" exclaimed the prisoner.

"Yes."

"Who can she be?"

"She says she is your friend, and she wants to come down and have a chat with you while you are eating."

"See here, mister, I believe this is a trap set for me."

"A trap?"

"Yes."

"How?"

"That is probably the woman who gave the false identification."

"Well, see here, if I were you I'd fall into the trap for

such a meal; and let me tell you, it won't count one way or the other if she does come down to see you. She has done you all the harm she could if she tried, and you might as well eat the meal. And take my advice, see her —yes, let her come down. If she is trying to entangle you why you may catch her in her own web, if as you say, it was a false identification; and I repeat, she cannot do you any more harm than she has done if she tried; and again if you see her you may persuade her to tell the truth.

The prisoner meditated a moment, and then said:

"All right, I am almost starved; I will not be squeamish, I will eat the meal. I may need all my strength, and besides, I will see her. If she intends to stick to her lie I may as well make the best of it and eat."

"That's the way to take it, but I reckon you will come out all right. Strange things happen here in New York —very strange things. You may have thought that fate was against you, but it is possible fate after all is dealing you a winning hand; we can never tell."

"I think I can tell."

"What can you tell?"

"I'm in the underdrift; everything is going against me. I'll get to the bottom, for I am going down, down."

"All right, when you strike bottom let me know, but you are a good ways from the bottom yet. Mark my words, young fellow—yes, I've seen people get out of a deeper hole than you are in, and don't you forget it."

"I hope I will get out, but do you know the girl who brought this meal?"

"No, I never saw her before."

"How did she know I was here?"

"She probably knew the officer, by sight at least, who brought you in, and she may intend to give you some

pointers. These creatures are not all as bad as they are painted; they are human and oftentimes very good hearted, better hearted than the upper-crust people who are always looking out for number one. Misfortune might have brought her down to what she is; we can never tell. I believe she is a good girl at heart, and she may intend to do a good turn."

"It's strange. She possesses a good face if the girl who sent me this meal is the same one who denounced me as Fred Goodman—and I am not Fred Goodman."

"She has a purpose in desiring to see you—yes, you can swear to that."

"All right; let her come down and see me. Poor thing! it is possible she may have made a mistake."

"No, she didn't make any mistake. These girls are too smart to make those kind of mistakes; but she may do you a good turn yet, so pitch in and eat and I will bring her down to see you. No harm in that, I'll swear."

The doorman locked the iron gate behind him, and the young prisoner, who was ravenously hungry, set to work to eat the good things that had been sent down to him, as he supposed, by the girl who had practically lied him into jail.

CHAPTER III.

A VEILED VISITOR — A THRILLING REVELATION — THE FATAL RESEMBLANCE — A MYSTERY SOLVED — A NOBLE RESOLVE — A LIGHT GONE OUT.

THE prisoner had about finished his meal when the doorman appeared, opened the door, and thrust a veiled lady into the cell; and he said:

"I'll give you half an hour, miss; make the most of your time."

The veiled girl entered, and upon the prisoner's invitation seated herself on the stool while our hero took a seat on the side of his iron cot. There followed an awkward silence for a few minutes—indeed, the period seemed a long time, and it was becoming oppressive when the prisoner said:

"Well, miss, what excuse have you to make for lying me into this cell?"

His answer was a sob from under the veil, and all the resentment of the young man who had been injured vanished at once. He was of a sympathetic temperament, and the real sorrow expressed in that one sob coming from a heart weighted with sorrow, and that heart belonging to a woman, as stated, drove away his feeling of resentment. He spoke in a softer and gentler tone as he said:

"Never mind, I will forgive you; it may be that you were mistaken."

The girl threw aside her veil, and indeed it was the same one who had lied about him; and a second look at her face revealed that she was even more beautiful than he had at first supposed—yes, more beautiful than Kate, the girl in Boston for whose sake he had started out to make his fortune; and she looked singularly interesting because of the look of sorrow and distress that rested upon her really beautiful features.

"No, I knew that you were not Fred Goodman when I declared that you were," said the girl between sobs and other evidences of distress.

"You knew that you were not mistaken?"

"I did."

"You knew that I was not Fred Goodman?"

“I did.”

“And you knew that I was accused of burglary?”

“Yes.”

“And you knew that I was innocent?”

“Yes.”

“And yet you deliberately lied about me?”

“Yes.”

Here the girl broke into a flood of tears. The prisoner waited until she had somewhat recovered her composure, and then asked:

“Why did you lie me into this cell?”

“To save my brother,” came the answer.

“To save your brother?”

“Yes.”

The prisoner was taken all aback. This was a ~~de~~ nouement he had not anticipated, nor had any one else who knew anything about the case. All had put a different assumption upon her character. As stated, the young prisoner was taken all aback, and there came a great change over his sentiments toward the girl, accepting that her statement was true; but he was a pretty smart chap and he admitted the possibility that her declaration was another lie, a mere excuse for her infamous accusation, or rather false identification. He determined to suspend judgment until he assured himself that she was really telling the truth, and that indeed her lie had been told to save a brother.

“Can you prove, miss, that you falsely identified ~~me~~ to save your brother?”

“Yes, and I will not let you suffer in the end.”

“How could you do it?”

“It is strange, but you bear a wonderful resemblance to my brother; I cannot explain it, but you and my brother could easily be mistaken for twins, and yet I do

not believe you are in any way related by kinship. I repeat, however, that the resemblance is very striking and remarkable."

"This is very strange," said the prisoner in a meditative mood.

"What is your name?" asked the girl, adding: "It is possible we may be connections."

"Never mind my name; tell me about your brother. Is he a burglar?"

"No."

"Has he been associated with criminals?"

"Unfortunately, yes, but he is not a criminal at heart. Oh, it is the old, old story."

"Tell me the old, old story," said the prisoner.

"I will; I owe it to you to tell you all, and I repeat, you shall not suffer for my brother's sins, for he has sinned, but he is not a criminal at heart. You were arrested through your resemblance to him. The man who arrested you is deceived. I do not believe the man who made the charge against you is deceived. He is a scoundrel. He is the cause of my brother's ruin. It was he who led my brother into crime, but why he should identify you I do not know, lest it is just possible that he may be deceived."

"You say your brother is a criminal?"

"Yes, before the law, but not at heart. Poor boy! he has been misled and deceived, and sought to redeem his one act by the commission of a second. He did enter that man's house—yes, as a burglar, but his purpose was a good one."

The young girl was presenting a strange enigma when she said her brother entered a house as a burglar, but with a good purpose. The young prisoner could not solve the enigma, and said:

"Yours is a strange statement. Tell me your story and explain clearly what you mean."

"I will. My brother and myself are children of a tradesman in New England. My brother came here to New York to enter business, and he secured a position through a young man who attended school with him up in New England. All went well and we were happy, but, alas! as it proved, my brother's friend fell into bad company and bad ways. He associated with gamblers, and my brother discovered the fact and tried to save him, and in order to do so also associated with gamblers, and as it proved thieves and burglars. My brother's friend gambled and to do so took money that did not belong to him. In the meantime I had come on to New York to get a position as typewriter. Our family became very reduced; my father's business is bad, his health is poor, and he has been under very great expense. In the meantime, in order to save his friend from disgrace, my brother also became a criminal. He loaned money to his friend which belonged to the firm whom he served. Matters went from bad to worse with my brother's friend, and one night he came to my brother and admitted that he had committed a forgery. My poor brother was amazed and fearfully frightened, for his friend had promised to reform and had promised to repay the money that my brother had loaned him. Instead he committed a more terrible crime and had gone deeper into the mire. My brother is a very resolute fellow. He learned from his friend that the forged paper was in the hands of the man who had deceived and who had led him on to his ruin. I am telling you all that I learned afterward; I did not know what was going on at the time or I might have prevented it. As I said, I knew nothing about it until all had happened. My brother made a

desperate resolve in order to save his friend. He learned that the rascal who had lured his friend had the forged paper in his possession. My brother determined unthinkingly to recover it by a bold move. He resolved to become a burglar, enter the man's house, and recover the forged note by actually stealing it. He entered the house, was detected, but he did not shoot at the man; he merely escaped, and then he came to me and told all the facts, and it was afterward that the detective brought you to me. I do not know how the detective came to associate me with my brother unless the man who holds the forged paper learned something about us. When you were brought before me your wonderful resemblance suggested to me on the moment a chance for saving my brother, and I told the lie, made the false identification, and immediately afterward resolved if worse came to worst that I would save you, and I will."

The remarkable narrative we have related was the one told to the prisoner, and our readers can well imagine that his sensations were strange and novel under all the circumstances. It is not necessary to state that he believed every word the beautiful girl had told him, her looks, her tones, her manner, all bore the absolute impress of truth. He did believe her, and he said:

"Miss, I believe your story, but you must not do anything until we all have had time to think the matter over. Where is your brother now?"

"He is in hiding, but will come forth and meet the charge if you are not able to prove an alibi."

"I can't prove an alibi."

The prisoner saw very plainly how the mistake had been made. The explanation of the mystery of his arrest was very pleasant to him, but he was in a sad dilemma after all. Here was a beautiful girl, and there was also

a young man who, urged by the best of motives, had become liable to punishment as a burglar. A young man who was morally innocent but technically guilty—yes, indeed, the young prisoner was confronted by a dilemma. He asked:

“What is your name, miss?”

“Edith Goodman.”

“And your brother’s name?”

“Thomas Frederick Goodman. He is called Fred, but his real name is Thomas.”

“He is your brother Tom?”

“Yes.”

“Strange, miss, but my name is Tom.”

“It is a singular complication and coincidence all round,” said the lovely girl, and a smile wreathed her sad, tear-marked face.

Tom, our hero, meditated a moment or two, and then said:

“Miss, I’ve a favor to ask. Your brother was prepared to sacrifice himself; it is right that he should have a chance to save himself if possible. Let him remain in hiding and we will wait and see what may develop.”

“You shall not suffer.”

“We will not talk about that now, but do as I said. Let your brother remain in hiding; something may be done.”

At that instant the heroic Tom had arrived at a desperate resolution. He did not say what he had determined to do, but one resolve he had taken and that was that the brother who had sacrificed himself from a sense of gratitude, he would not allow to suffer in consequence of his noble attempt to save a friend, even if he himself did have to suffer.

Tom was able to hold only a few moments’ further con-

versation with the fair girl, when the doorman appeared and said: "Time's up."

Our hero had impressed upon the girl the idea that the chances were in favor of saving her brother, and had secured from her a promise that he should not reveal himself until the last moment. The girl departed and it was like taking a light away and leaving a man in a dark room when she went forth from that cell and left Tom to his own sad reflections.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DETECTIVE'S RETURN—THE PRISONER A FOOL—TRYING TO VERIFY A SECOND TALE—NOT QUITE SUCH A FOOL—THE DETECTIVE LAYS OUT FOR A GREAT TRICK.

It was in the morning when Tom was arrested, and some hours passed after the departure of the veiled visitor from the cell when the detective who had first visited our hero reappeared. The officer came in with a smile on his face, and in a cheery voice said:

"It's all right, young fellow."

"It is?"

"Yes."

"How?"

"I believe your story."

"You do?"

"Yes, I have verified it."

"You have?"

"I have."

"That's strange."

"It is?"

"Yes."

"How?"

"Because what I told you was all a lie."

"A lie?" almost screamed the detective, a look of consternation settling on his face.

"Yes, a lie."

"How a lie?"

"I denied my identity, I am really Fred Goodman."

"You are Fred Goodman?"

"I am."

"Young fellow, you are lying now."

"I tell you I admit to being Fred Goodman."

"You can admit it until you are black in the face, but I tell you that you are not Fred Goodman."

"I shall plead guilty when I come into court."

"You will?"

"I will."

The officer meditated a few moments, and then asked:

"What has led you to come to this resolve?"

"It does not matter."

"Do you know if you claim to be Fred Goodman you may really commit a crime, and be punished anyhow for perjury?"

Tom turned pale; he had not thought of that end of it.

"Come, young man," said the officer, "tell me what has led you to come to this resolution?"

"First tell me what you have discovered."

"I have discovered that you are the victim of a resemblance."

"You have?"

"I have."

"How did you find it out?"

"I found men who know the real Goodman, who have known him in New York for over a year, and I have

heard from Boston. I have your pedigree in your native city. You were not in New York two weeks ago; Fred Goodman has lived in New York over a year. That is as far as I have proceeded, but I am satisfied of your innocence, and I thought to relieve your mind I would come here and tell you."

"Well, sir, you are very kind, but I am Fred Goodman, and shall meet the penalty of my crime."

"No, you will not; but listen: the reason that led you to come to such a resolution must be very powerful. Better confide in me; you have reason to recognize me to be a good friend."

"Yes, I believe you are."

"Then tell me what has occurred. It may be that you have been fooled. Has Goodman's girl been here to see you and told you a cock and bull story that has led you to make a martyr and a darn fool of yourself?"

The detective's words caused Tom's heart to drop away down into his boots. The question came in such a clear and matter-of-fact manner that it suddenly occurred to him that possibly he had been fooled and was about to make a darn fool of himself.

"Come, come," said the detective; "tell me all about it."

Tom told his story and the officer listened without once interrupting the strange tale, and when the narrative was concluded he said:

"Young man, I applaud your determination; I have investigated one story; I will investigate the other, and if I prove story number two true I will save both of you. But mark my words: I do not expect to prove the story of Miss Goodman to be true. I do not believe she is Fred Goodman's sister; I believe she is a bad girl; but I will investigate, and if her story is true, why the man

who holds the forged paper will be brought to terms at once—yes, and I repeat, I will save you and this young chap, Fred Goodman. It is a strange narrative; I do not believe it; but after all it may be true, for all the incidents are strange because one fact is certain: you were arrested on a resemblance—there is no denying that, and it is possible, just possible, that the girl told you the truth; but I will investigate and I will know the real truth inside of two hours."

"And will you report back to me?"

"I will, young man, I will."

The detective went away, but before going he once more said:

"I fear, young man, you have been sadly fooled."

The detective so believed, and we are compelled to record that Tom feared that he was right. As he revolved the matter in his mind and recalled the cunning of criminals, male and female, he was forced to mutter:

"Yes, yes; I fear I have been sadly fooled."

The conviction made him feel very sad indeed, and he laid down on his cot and his reflections were anything but pleasant.

It was night when the detective returned. He looked very solemn, and our hero's heart told him that indeed he had been the victim of a cunning woman. He mentally concluded:

"What a darn fool I have been."

The detective entered the cell, and said:

"Young man, I have given a great deal of time to your case. Do you know why?"

"I do not."

"Because I believe you are an honest and resolute young fellow; and you are pretty clever at deceiving after all; but you will not be called upon to make a martyr of yourself."

"It is as I feared," said Tom. "Yes, when you left me I concluded that indeed I had been fooled."

"It was an extraordinary story the girl told you."

"Yes, and had you listened to her tale and seen her face you would have been deceived also."

"I've seen her face and I've listened to her tale of woe," said the detective.

"And she has confessed?"

"Yes."

"I suppose she knew it was no use to attempt to deceive you, but she found in me a gossoon."

"Her story is true."

"What?" exclaimed Tom.

"Her story is true, every word of it. I've verified it and I am going to get you and that young fellow out of the scrape. I've said so, and I'll do it."

"I'm delighted," said Tom; "yes, I am ready if necessary to suffer for that fair girl."

"How about Kate in Boston?"

"I am thinking of the noble self-denial of that girl's brother; and it's strange that he should resemble me."

"Yes, strange that he should resemble you, not only in appearance but in his temperament. I tell you I will save you both, so you can lie down on your cot there and go to sleep. You will probably go to court in the morning, but it will be all right. You have nothing to fear and you can sleep the sleep of the just—yes, just so—for I am on to this whole thing and I mean business."

The detective departed and Tom laid down on his couch and prepare to go to sleep, and while he so lies we will follow the good-hearted man, the detective, one of those clear-headed men who can read the face as though a life history were written on the cheek.

The detective's name was Murray. Some of our readers

have read of his exploits in some of our former stories, for this man has furnished "oceans" of interesting incidents for detective recital in our narratives.

Murray had called on Edith and had heard from her lips the same story she had told to the prisoner, and he persuaded her to reveal to him the hiding-place of her brother, under a promise to save both the Toms and set them free. From Tom Goodman the detective learned the name of the man who made the charge of burglary. Murray knew him—yes, knew the man from A to Z, and was down on his past career, and he said to Fred Goodman :

"It's dead easy, I'd make that scamp give up the forged draft and withdraw all charges. I want you to go with me; you need have no fear."

The detective had noted the resemblance between Tom Goodman and the young prisoner in the cell. It was really very striking, but not more so than in dozens of cases known to him where the parties resembling each other were not in any way related, and it is not a singular fact that these resemblances should exist even between people who are total strangers to each other.

Murray knew the haunts of the man he was after, and he determined to give the scoundrel—for the fellow was a scoundrel—a bit of a surprise.

Fred Goodman trusted the detective and went with him, and during their walk along to the place where our hero expected to find his man he instructed young Goodman just how he was to proceed.

Murray led the way to a private gambling house. He had the entrée and he was gotten up in an excellent disguise. He secured an entrance and with young Goodman entered the place, and the two, the detective and his young companion, entered the saloon, as it was called.

The gambling room was on an upper floor; Murray was gotten up as a countryman. It was one of his favorite rôles and he could play it to perfection, and his entrance into the room with young Goodman did not attract any attention until the man they sought and whose name was Petit chanced to turn and see them. It was as though he had been confronted by a ghost. He stared for a moment and then there came a glitter to his eyes. He crossed the room and stepping close to Goodman whispered:

"So you are out on bail, eh? Well, young man, take my advice and 'skip' while you have a chance, or up you'll go sure, and don't you forget it."

"I came here to have a talk with you."

"You did, eh?"

"Yes."

"Who is that fellow with you?"

"A friend from New England; he is my bondsman."

"Oh, I see, and you want a talk with me?"

"Yes."

"All right, talk away."

"I want you to take me and my friend to a private room. Possibly I can come to some sort of an understanding with you."

Petit always had an eye for money, and did not care just how he got it as long as he got it. He hesitated a moment, and then asked:

"What is your proposition?"

"I want to talk it over with you alone."

"Alone?"

"Yes."

"How about your friend?"

"I want him present."

"See here, young fellow, you are up to some scheme."

"I tell you I have a proposition to make. If that's a scheme then I am up to the scheme."

"All right; we have a private room here in the house, but let me tell you, if you are up to any little game it will go bad with you and you will be beat, that's all."

"You are prepared against a game?"

"Oh, yes, I think I am, but don't attempt any appeals for mercy, do you understand? I've got you just where I want you and I'll keep you there; but come along, I'll listen to what you have to say."

While the above conversation was in progress the supposed countryman was looking around in a surprised sort of way. Oh, yes, Murray the detective well knew how to play the game of innocence to perfection.

CHAPTER V.

A DETECTIVE'S NEAT PLAY—THE FORGED NOTE SURRENDERED—
A DENOUEMENT BOTH PLEASANT AND EFFECTIVE—A WORD
OF ADVICE—A VISIT TO THE CELL.

PETIT was a little nervous despite his air of bravado, and his nervousness arose from the fact that criminals are always expecting evil—"their enemies do haunt them." Once in the little anteroom he closed the door, and said sharply:

"Well, out with your tenor."

"You still have that note?"

There came a fierce light in the eyes of Petit. This was the first intimation that he had that any one knew positively about a note. Meantime, the countryman was sitting and looking as simple-like as a hay tosser in haying time at a noon meal.

"I thought you came here to talk about your own affairs."

"It's my affair to demand from you that note which you beguiled from my friend, Jack Merrit."

"Oh, Jack Merrit is your friend?"

"Yes."

"A friend of a burglar, eh?"

"You need not call names, I am not here for funny business. I called upon you to get you to return that note."

"What note?"

"The note that was placed with you by Jack Merrit, to get discounted."

"Young fellow, you have an awful cheek; I've no note. Merrit gave me no note to get discounted; and if you think you can scare me into not appearing against you why you make a mistake, that's all, and I'll see what the district attorney means in letting you out on bail within twenty-four hours after your arrest, and before you have appeared before any judge."

"Oh, I see, you are not aware that you had the wrong man arrested."

"What's that?"

"Did you think I was arrested?"

"I saw you arrested."

"Say, Petit, when you asked me if I was out on bail I gave you a Roland for an Oliver. I did not catch on to what you meant. I see now, and I'll tell you straight, I have never been arrested."

It was apparent that Petit had been deceived by a resemblance, and he took no stock in Goodman's statement. He still believed the young man was out on bail, and he said:

"Don't you attempt any funny business. I'll give it

to you straight, I did think I might let up on you, but come any more of that business and I'll send you up, that's plain."

"Oh, you won't send me anywhere; but if you don't hand over that note I'll send you somewhere."

Petit gazed in amazement, then he permitted his anger to arise, and he said:

"See here, young fellow, give me any more of your slack and I'll knock you over. I've been kind to you, I have."

The countryman here stepped up, and said:

"Don't talk about knocking any one down, my friend; I won't stand that. I see you are a violent man, but extend your violence in talk; don't strike anyone while I am around."

Petit glanced at the stranger, and demanded:

"What have you got to say about it?"

"All I have to say is that the young man made a request. You had better grant it. You see, it will save trouble."

"Save trouble?" repeated Petit.

"Yes, save trouble."

"See here, what does all this mean?"

"Don't you catch on?" said the supposed countryman.

"I'll catch you in a minute with a crack on the head."

"Oh, you will?"

"Yes, I will."

"Don't attempt anything so rash."

The supposed countryman had used a sort of country tone during his talk, but there came a moment when the man Petit appeared "to take a tumble," as the saying goes. The two men were moving along as though by preconcerted arrangement. To use a second vulgarism he began to "smell a mouse," and he changed his tune and manner. He said to Goodman:

"See here, my young friend, some one has been giving you a 'steer'; possibly your friend is a young fellow whom I did a service for, and who it appears is returning it by lying about me. I have no note to cash for him—never saw a note."

"Yes, you have a note, and the note is a forgery, and you know it is a forgery."

"Look here, my young friend, you are going a little too far. I may make you prove your words."

"I am prepared to prove my words now."

"You are?"

"I am."

"Do so."

"Well, I reckon my friend here can do it for me," said Goodman, and there was a triumphant smile on his face as he spoke.

Petit turned to the supposed countryman, and said:

"If you are being fooled by this chap I am sorry for you; at the same time if you have anything to say, why sing out your tenor."

The detective looked at Petit a moment in an inquiring sort of way, and at length said:

"Haven't you and I met before?"

"I do not recall ever having seen you, and I am getting tired of this interview."

"I remember you."

"You do, eh?"

"Yes."

"There is where you have the advantage over me."

"Weren't you hauled up for forgery in Chicago once?"

"Who are you talking to?"

"You told me to sing out my tenor; I am singing, that's all—singing an old song. Weren't you nipped for counterfeiting in St. Louis?"

"Hang you! I'll break your head."

"Oh, no, not to-day. Let me see, didn't Murray the detective interview you a short time ago on a little matter which he concluded to hold in abeyance provided you ran on your good behavior. Didn't he give you a chance to reform?"

The man Petit began to weaken and turn pale, and he trembled as the detective continued:

"Petit, don't get on a high horse; this young man has made a very modest request. You know that note is of no use to you because its existence is known, and its character is known. I'd advise you to give it up and at once."

"Who are you?" demanded Petit, and he trembled like an aspen leaf.

"I thought we had met before; I thought you would recall having seen me."

"What is it you want me to do? Pull off your togs, let me know who I am dealing with."

Quick as lightning Murray pulled off his disguise and stood revealed, and Petit exclaimed:

"I am a fool; I didn't 'tumble.' "

"No, you are a fool to break your agreement with me."

"I haven't broken my agreement."

"You know me now?"

"But I told the truth; that chap does owe me money. I didn't use the note; I was afraid it wasn't all right."

"Oh, I see. Well you are on the high-road toward reform when you show such excellent caution—yes, I am proud of you. So you doubted the genuineness of the note?"

"I did."

"And you did not use it?"

"I did not."

“You would not use a forged note?”

Murray had dropped the country manner, and spoke in a soothing tone.

“No, I wouldn’t use a forged note.”

“Then you have it?”

“Yes.”

“Say, Petit, owing to your past career it would hurt your reputation for you to be found drowned with that note in your clothes. Now as a matter of precaution, considering the uncertainties of life, suppose you hand it over to me.”

“Who will make good my losses to the young man? If I hold this note I will have a grip on him, and may get my money.”

“If you hold that note you will lose your grip.”

“I will?”

“Yes.”

“Why?”

“I’ll close in on you.”

“Murray, you are hard on a man.”

“That’s better than being hard on a boy. Come, come, Petit; there is no time to lose. I want that note.”

Petit drew a wallet from his coat, extracted the forged note, and handed it toward the detective. The latter said:

“Give it to Goodman.”

Petit obeyed, and the detective asked:

“Is that the note, young man?”

“Yes.”

“That ends it,” said Petit, “and I am out and injured.”

“No, that does not end it. You made a charge of burglary against this young man.”

“And my charge was a true one; I’ll maintain it.”

“What! a man who has been the subject of mercy will

show no mercy to another? Out on you, Petit, for a hard-hearted wretch. This young man only intended to interview you and ask you on behalf of his friend to surrender the note. You know that."

"Is that true?"

"Don't you know it is true? Now, see here: to-morrow this young man will be summoned to court; I want you to be there and withdraw your charge; make an affidavit that it was all a mistake. If you don't you will take his place before the court and—" Suddenly Murray's whole manner changed, his eyes gleamed, his form appeared to suddenly develop to greater stature, as he added: "If you don't do it, and attempt to 'skip' I will follow you the world over, and I will find you and take you to St. Louis. You know me and know that I mean what I say; and besides, now that you have lost the note there is nothing to be gained in putting the young man out of the way, and you can't do it if you try, for I will prove his motive in entering your house and that will bring out this little note transaction and all the particulars. So, old man, let's go easy and nice in this matter."

"Murray you are a terror."

"You will be at court?"

"I will."

"If you are not on hand I will find you."

"I know that."

"Don't be late."

"I will be on time."

"I needn't tell you how to conduct yourself."

"No."

"All right; we've had a very satisfactory interview, old man—yes, a very pleasant one to me. Be at court early to-morrow, and we will settle matters all right."

"And after that?"

"Oh, you shall have one more chance, but I will keep my eye on you. I'll have to 'close in' on you some day, I see that, for you are set in your ways."

We will not attempt to describe the thoughts that were passing through Petit's mind. One fact was assured: in one direction he was beaten, and beaten by the man who had been his *bête noir*.

CHAPTER VI.

A COMPLETE VICTORY—IN THE COURTRoom—A LETTER THAT WAS A SURPRISE—A CHANGED DETERMINATION—A PLEASANT MEETING—IN A LODGING-HOUSE—RESCUE NUMBER TWO.

MURRAY and young Goodman left the club-house, and once on the street our hero said:

"Young man, you have learned a lesson to-night. The first false step leads to misery and shame if followed by succeeding steps in a downward career. Take heed. To-morrow I will see you, also your young friend who forged this note, which I will retain for the present. In the meantime I will go and see the young man who is the real martyr in this whole affair."

The detective proceeded to the station-house where he met the ward detective, and to the latter he explained all that had occurred, and at the same time complimented him on his prompt arrest. The compliments mollified any feeling the ward detective might have felt as concerned his loss of professional glory. Murray also related all the facts to the captain, and then went down to see the gallant young prisoner who had been the victim of a resemblance.

Tom was awake, and the officer said:

"Well, young man, I see you are not obeying in ~~true~~
tions."

"I could not sleep."

"It's all right; I've a strange tale to relate."

The detective entered the cell, the doorman admitting him, and once inside he related to our hero all that had occurred, and then said:

"You don't object to appearing in court to-morrow only to be released?"

"I will go willingly, and I look upon my arrest as providential considering the denouement."

"Well, strange incidents do occur. It is possible that had the young man Goodman been arrested he would have been sent up. I would not have gotten on to the case. As it is 'all's well that ends well,' and a fair young girl is saved much misery and disgrace. I will be on hand in the morning at the court. You will not be handcuffed and you need not give your real name, but, young man, there is no reason why you should not reveal your real name to me."

"My name is Tom Affleck."

"A good name; and now, Tom, let me tell you, crime imprints itself upon the human face. It is lucky you were an honest lad. Your face reflected an honest soul, and that was what interested me in your case, otherwise I fear you would have been sent up. As it is you are all right; always maintain an honest character and in good time you are sure to win. Here is twenty dollars; I loan you this money. You can return it to me some day."

"I do not wish to accept your money; I do not need it. I have a little money, but I am very much obliged to you."

"I will bid you good-night now: you can sleep for the

few hours that you will have to remain here, and at the end of that time you will be free to go where you choose."

On the following morning Tom was taken to court. The examination was held in the justice's private room. Petit was on hand, and our hero was discharged. He had expected he would meet Detective Murray; he saw the detective in court, but after his discharge failed to find him; neither was the young man Goodman nor his sister present. Tom, however, walked out of the court a free man, and Petit left the room a puzzled man, for he had observed, despite the resemblance, that Tom Affleck was not Fred Goodman.

Having his freedom Tom went to a restaurant and secured a good meal, and later he proceeded to the mail sub-station and inquire for letters. His face became radiant when he received the letter. Alas! how little he dreamed what a blow the contents of that letter was to deal to him. He strolled off to a convenient place to read the precious missive, for he knew it was from Kate, the fair girl for whose sake he had left Boston, and had started out upon the world to earn a fortune. Our hero went to one of the parks, sat down on a bench, and eagerly drew forth his letter. He glanced at the first words and his heart stood still. Terrible was the revelation suggested in the very first paragraph. It did not announce a death; it would have been better possibly if such had been the case. The missive read as follows:

"*Mr. Tom Affleck: I received your letter and I have thought over its contents, and I have also consulted with mamma. I have arrived at the conclusion that you and I have been very foolish. I thought I loved you, but since you went away I have discovered that I was self-deceived. We are both too young to think of love, and besides, we are too poor. I have lived a hand-to-mouth existence all my*

life. I long to be rich and enjoy life--enjoy those pleasures I have been denied because of poverty. You are a good fellow and I like you, but all between us is off. You are poor, I am poor; if I were rich I might learn to love you, but we are both penniless and must not think of love or marriage. Do not ever write to me again; do not visit me. In fact, it is better that we never meet again, at least until many years from now, and then as friends. Do not think I cast you off; no, no, it is simply a fact that I am correcting a sad mistake—a mistake we both made, but it was after all a boy and girl delusion. I know you will soon forget me and I will try to forget you, but we must not meet again, at least until years have rolled by. I wish you success and remain your friend, but friend alone. I have consulted with mamma and she approves every word of this, and believes it is all for the best.

Yours in kindness,

“KATE.”

Tom was not profane, but a bad word did escape his lips when he ceased reading what under all the conditions can be denominated a heartless epistle. He had loved Kate for years and he had been kind to her and to her mother. He had surrendered all his savings, had given all his earnings for Kate's sake. He had, as intimated, left his home and started out a wanderer on the broad earth, and here at the last moment he had been cast aside like a worn-out and useless garment.

He read and re-read the letter and then put it away, and started off for a long walk in Central Park. He desired to be alone and commune with himself, and when in a remote corner of the park he gave utterance to his thoughts. He said:

“I will return to Boston and face Kate and learn what has caused such a sudden change in her feelings toward me—yes, I will take the Fall River boat to-night and learn the real truth from her own lips.”

Tom commenced to walk, and he traveled at a gait which meant a man laboring under great excitement. It's good to take a long walk when one is mad and liable to make a hasty determination. The vigorous walk later cooled off the heat in Tom's brain, and he was able to consider events more coolly, and then he recalled several little incidents that had occurred just before his departure. He remembered that an old bachelor had become a boarder in the house; he remembered that the old bachelor did not attempt to conceal his admiration of Kate, and he recalled that this bachelor was reported to be rich, also that Kate and her mother were very free in urging him to carry out his resolution to go and seek his fortune, and he exclaimed:

"By gosh! I think I can see now that they were hastening me away. They wanted to get me out of the way, and Kate's letter is a confirmation."

Tom recalled still further incidents. Once having been able to recognize faults in his beloved he remembered that upon many occasions she had betrayed selfishness and dissatisfaction, and his final conclusion was that he would not go to Boston, nor would he answer Kate's letter. He appreciated that the chances were against him, but he did think Kate might have waited and have given him a chance, especially as her mother had taken all his savings and earnings, and he did feel sad, and there were moments when there came a return of his old-time affection in all its force; but he was a determined chap, and in a hurry made up his mind. He was loyal, but the change in his love affairs made him desperate.

That evening he was sitting in a restaurant where both ladies and gents dine, when a young man and woman entered. One glance was sufficient; Tom recognized the

fair girl, Edith Goodman, and he naturally concluded that the young man was her brother; when he looked more sharply at the latter he could himself see where the resemblance came in.

The girl Edith at first did not see Tom, but after she and her brother were seated she saw and recognized him. She spoke a few words to her brother and the latter went over and addressed our hero, and invited him to go over to the table where he and his sister were to dine. Edith greeted him cheerfully, and said:

“I recognized you at a glance. This is my brother, and we both thank you for all you have done for us.”

“I did nothing for you—it was the detective.”

“Oh, yes, but the detective told us how you had determined to suffer in my brother’s place, how you proclaimed yourself as Fred Goodman; and it was you who interested the good man in our behalf.”

Tom was charmed. Who could fail to be charmed in the company of one as beautiful and charming as Edith Goodman? And he was beguiled into telling a part of his history. He did not tell about Kate and the way he had been cruelly jilted, but the balance of his history he freely related. He had already heard from Edith the story of herself and brother, and when the party had concluded their meal Tom received an invitation to call on them at their rooms, and with sweet pleasantries Edith said:

“You know where we live, for you have been there,” and there succeeded a shadow on her beautiful face as she recalled how she had betrayed the innocent youth by a false identification.

“I will come,” said Tom, and a little later they parted.

That same night Tom visited a lodging-house. He had heard the story of the young man who had made the

forged note, and it was a strange fate which led him to the lodging where he had determined to stay that night, as will be detailed.

Tom had entered his room and was getting ready to retire when he heard words in the adjoining room, and the words were very suggestive—indeed, so suggestive that our hero resumed his clothing, and going to the adjoining room forced in the door and confronted a young man who held a pistol to his temple, and was just about to pull the trigger. Tom leaped across the room at one bound, snatched the pistol from the man's grasp, and exclaimed:

“You young fool! what were you about to do?”

“Kill myself,” came the answer, in a sullen tone.

“What made you attempt to kill yourself?”

“Because I do not wish to live any longer.”

“That is strange.”

“Is it?”

“Yes.”

“I'll do it all the same; you have only delayed my purpose, and I don't thank you.”

“Oh, yes, you do; you've made up your mind already that you were acting like a fool.”

“Yes, I've acted like a fool, and the resolution to kill myself was one of the best resolutions I ever took in all my miserable life.”

Tom never could imagine what caused a certain suspicion to arise in his mind, but a suspicion did arise as to the identity of the would-be suicide, and he said:

“You are laboring under some temporary hallucination.”

“No, I am not; I've been thinking about killing myself for a long time. I don't care that my execution has been postponed, however; I remember now that I want to write one or two letters.”

"Yes, I see, you want to write a letter to your friend, Fred Goodman."

Our hero shot out the name and statement as a test, and perceived on the instant that his suspicions as to the identity of the young man were clearly verified.

CHAPTER VII.

GLOWING PROSPECTS—A PLEASANT EVENING WITH FRIENDS—A SUGGESTION—A DETERMINATION—OUT AT SEA—A FLOATING HULK—GUIDED BY AN IMPRESSION.

"How do you know that I am a friend of Fred Goodman?"

Tom saw his advantage, and without thinking said in a patronizing tone:

"Oh, I know all about you."

The words had hardly escaped his lips when the young man sprang upon him, with the words:

"Aha! so you have run me down, eh? I'll kill you before you shall take me."

Tom was a Boston lad and had led a hardy life. He was a good one, and it would have been an easy thing for him to knock out his assailant, but he did not wish to knock him out; he only desired to hold him until he could explain; thus he was put at a great disadvantage, for the youth who had assailed him was strong and possessed at the moment the strength and energy of despair. Tom managed to throw him, however, after a tough wrestle of it, and once having him down said:

"Take it easy, Merrit, my son; I am not a detective, but your friend, and a friend of Fred Goodman."

The young man, Merrit, relaxed his struggles, and demanded:

“Are you telling the truth?”

“I am, on my honor.”

“Then let me up and I will talk it over with you.”

Tom did let the young man up, and said:

“Haven’t you heard all the facts?”

“What facts?”

“When did you see Goodman last?”

“Three days ago.”

“You haven’t seen him later than that?”

“No.”

“Then I’ve great news for you. The forged note has been recovered from Petit and is in Goodman’s hands. There is no need for you to kill yourself; you are all right now.”

“Is this true?”

“Yes, it is true.”

“Then you are my savior indeed, for I would have been a dead man now if you hadn’t snatched the pistol out of my hand.”

“I believe you, but it’s all right.”

Tom turned up the gas in the room and for the first time Merrit saw his rescuer’s features, and he exclaimed:

“By gosh! Fred, I did not recognize your voice.”

Tom laughed, and said:

“That is not strange, for I am not Fred; but I’m beginning to believe I am his twin brother.”

“I didn’t know he had a brother.”

“Nor did I know I had one; but come, I am going to tell you all about it.”

Tom did relate all the incidents that had transpired just as we have recorded them, ~~and~~ Merrit extending his hand said:

"You are a bully good fellow, I wish we could go somewhere and have a drink."

"Hold on, Merrit; if you are going to return to drink it really would have been better if I had let you blow your brains out, for if you are not a fool you can see that you were blowing them out slowly every time you took a drink. It was liquor that got you into all the trouble you've gone through during the last few months, and if you stick to it liquor will get you in worse trouble. Now that you are free once, for your own sake let rum alone—yes, let it alone forever."

"By ginger! I will, I swear I will."

"If you keep your resolution you will be all right, and on your feet in a year or so—yes, recover the position and happiness you once had and held."

"I'll do it."

"Well, then, old man, good-night, and good luck to you. You have a chance to make a fresh start; take my advice and start in right. Good-night."

Our hero returned to his own room, listened awhile, and then when a good healthy snore sounded from the adjoining room he turned over to start in and take a snore himself. He needed a rest and he got it.

On the following morning Tom looked in Merrit's room, but the young man had disappeared, and our hero sat down to think over his own projects. Business wore a gloomy aspect in New York City and he despaired of getting anything to do, and under all the circumstances he was determined not to return to Boston.

The evening following he spent with his friends—new friends—the Goodmans, and learned that Fred anticipated a discharge from his position. Indeed, their prospects were so gloomy it had been decided that Edith should return home, and Fred said:

"I'll never go home; and if I am discharged I'll go to sea."

The words "go to sea" came like a magic suggestion to Tom—he had never thought of it. He did think of the suggestion, however, afterward. He spent a pleasant evening with the brother and sister and he was more than charmed by the sweet manners and excellent temperament of Edith, and that night when he left her presence and gained the street he muttered:

"Hang it! if I were rich or doing well I don't think I'd feel so bad about being shaken off by Kate after all; but it was a hard blow, and under some circumstances I might have felt it worse, but when a fellow don't know which way he is going to turn for his next meal or night's lodging he hasn't much time to spend in regrets over having received 'the mitten.' "

As intimated, Tom thought over the suggestion about going to sea. He had served once on a yacht and really thought he was quite a sailor—indeed, he had studied navigation more as an amusement than with any idea that he could ever have any practical use for his nautical knowledge, and so it often occurs. We acquire certain knowledge which we do not value at the time, but which later on may possibly turn in our favor.

Tom considered long and well. He might get on some vessel going to a foreign country where he might leave the ship and settle down. He had often heard of men who went away and fell into good luck and good business in some foreign land. He lay a long time in his lodging-house bed, and ere he closed his eyes in sleep he had determined to go to sea, little dreaming of the strange, weird, and wonderful adventures that were to follow his determination. He was up bright and early on the following day, and after a good breakfast went down to the

docks, and he learned that he would have little trouble in securing a berth. Sailors are always in demand, and he decided it was only a matter of course with him as to what sort of a vessel he would ship in. Having lived in Boston, a great shipping port, he knew all about land sharks and men smugglers and bogus shipping offices, and he concluded there were the same allurements in New York, and he strove to steer clear of them all and ship **on his own hook**. He did not announce his determination to ship until he came across the right man and the right ship bound for the right port, but in the course of the day he found his ship, his man, and his port—that is, the way and means for reaching the port. He came across a captain who was about to sail for Australia, and he decided that Australia was a good port to make. He lay around until he got a good chance to talk to the captain of the ship. He found him to be a New England man, and a good type of the enterprising, straightforward New England sailor. Tom opened up his proposition, and when he announced that he was a Boston boy the captain went into his history, and appeared satisfied that it would not be a bad thing under all the circumstances for the young man to make the trip. We will not dwell upon the immediate incidents that followed, but seven days following his determination he was aboard ship and going down the Narrows without saying a word to a living soul among any of his friends as to his resolution. He did write to Kate acknowledging the receipt of her letter, and stating that under all the circumstances it might be a wise thing for them to call their engagement off. He admitted that he was poor, his prospects gloomy, and that he could not in fairness ask any girl to wait for him to make a fortune. He did not utter one word of reproach or criticism, and as he folded and sealed the letter, he muttered:

"Well, that will please her, and I can say that for once I had the good fortune to gratify her, and no questions asked."

We will not dwell upon Tom's experiences during the first few months of his sea life. The routine on a sailing vessel is about the same every time. Calms and storms, working and eating, and the usual fun in the forecastle when under easy sail.

The ship in which our hero sailed was due for a South American port, and then if lucky she was to head for Australia; and it was eight months after leaving home when our hero found himself in mid-ocean on the Pacific, and heading for the land where he hoped to secure a chance to settle down. Alas! all had gone well up to the time mentioned, when a furious gale came on, and when it was over the good ship was a dismantled hulk, a regular derelict floating at the will of the wind and waves, and so the good ship floated for four months. She drifted, and the crew fortunately had plenty of provisions and fared well, but were unhappy all the same, all save Tom. He enjoyed the catastrophe; that is, he would not have yearned after it, but as it had come upon him he, as stated, enjoyed it, and years afterward in talking of his experience he always said he did not know what inspired him, but he did have a feeling that in some strange way good was to come to him, even out of what the rest of the crew considered a dire calamity, and it created no enthusiasm when after four months a sail hove in sight and there came a chance to escape from the old hulk.

The sight of a vessel making down toward them filled the others of the crew with joy and delight, and they gave vent to their joy by wild cheers and frantic huzzas. Tom, on the contrary, felt sad. It was strange that he should under all the circumstances; he did not want to

leave the old relict. He had become possessed of an idea that he was drifting to fortune—good fortune—and here was a vessel making for them, and rescue was at hand.

Tom went below and he thought the matter over. He did not reveal his disappointment, but he thought seriously, and finally arrived at an extraordinary decision. He resolved to remain on the old derelict and drift—yes, drift until he drifted to death under the waves or to good luck. Having decided upon his course he did not reveal his determination, but resolutely resolved to carry it out. He knew the men would not consent to his remaining behind, and in order to succeed it would be necessary to resort to a trick. He hid himself; it was an easy thing to do as the old ship was really sailing with ballast only, expecting to secure a cargo in Australia. He went on deck, waited until the rescuing vessel was close down on the hulk, and then he hid, and one might say acted like a crazy man for so doing. But we shall see.

CHAPTER VIII.

**ALL ABOARD BUT ONE—A MISSING MEMBER OF THE BRIG'S CREW
—THE YOUNG MAN ON THE OLD HULK—PREPARING FOR
CONTINGENCIES—AHA! LAND AT LAST—STRANGE REVELA-
TIONS TO COME.**

THE vessel came down; the weather was good, a boat was lowered, and the chief officer of the sailing ship boarded the hulk. A conference followed and it was decided that the crew of the wrecked brig should go aboard the big ship which had so fortunately hove in sight and had seen their signals.

A transference of all that was valuable began, and the crew were busy, and it was fully six hours before the transfer was completed, and then the sailors were prepared to go aboard the big ship. At this critical moment Tom overheard a conversation which bore a fearful import. The rescuing captain proposed scuttling the old hulk. Tom's blood ran cold at the proposition. Fortunately, the captain of the brig would not consent, and after some argument pro and con it was decided to let her drift, and our hero was relieved and happy, but under ordinary circumstances he had no reason to feel so; but we can never tell what is going to happen, and strange impressions sometimes act as governors and lead to very strange results.

Having decided not to scuttle the brig the crew merely left her, and it was night when they did so. There was no roll-call, no one thought that any of their number would be fool enough to remain on the old hulk, and in the darkness Tom stole up on deck and lay under the forward bulwark as the last boat was pulled away, and he did not experience one feeling of regret; on the contrary it was with a feeling of express delight that he saw his companions of twelve months go away, with the possibility confronting him that he would never see any of them again.

Meantime all hands save one got aboard the big ship, and soon her great sails were spread, and when morning dawned she was fifty miles away from the old hulk which had drifted in an opposite direction from which the great ship was sailing.

It was late in the morning when the captain of the drifting brig came on deck. He walked forward to speak with his men, and he asked for Tom, and then the inquiry went round from mouth to mouth, and a search

was made, but no Tom could be found. The captain hunted all over the ship, and was finally forced to conclude that the Yankee boy had either been lost overboard in the darkness, or had been overlooked and left on board of the drifting brig. The captain when forced to the conclusion was sad indeed, for he had formed a great fancy for Tom. Nothing, however, could be done. He could not ask the captain of the big ship to put about and make a second rescue at the cost of possibly three days' time, especially when a good wind was carrying his ship toward its destined port. Talking to his mate, the captain of the brig said:

“I fear the lad was lost overboard.”

The mate replied:

“I do not share your belief.”

“What do you think?”

“He is on board the old hulk; and to tell the truth I half-wish I was there with him.”

“How was it he was left?”

“Oh, he was probably below and fell asleep, and we came away without missing him.”

“I hope he is on board; he has plenty of provisions and may come out all right in the end after all.”

“I think so, and it is just possible he stayed on board purposely. He is a queer fellow and very plucky and determined. He said to me once that we might drift to some island, form a colony, and live there the rest of our days.”

“He may find an island,” said the captain, “and be chewed up as food by the natives.”

“Should not be surprised either way; or he may become king of an island some day. Such things have happened. One thing is certain: if that lad is aboard the old hulk he is there by choice, and we have no need to

mourn over it. He wanted to have his own way, and he has taken it without consulting me."

"And you think he stayed aboard purposely?"

"Yes, I do."

"All right, if he did he deserves any fate he may meet, good or bad."

"He does, and I rather believe and hope he will turn up all right some day, sound as a dollar and happy as a lark at sunrise."

While the captain and his chief officer were discussing Tom's chances our hero was at the very moment happy as a lark at sunrise, and enjoying a solitary breakfast with great zest while drifting away toward what—well, we shall see.

Our readers must not think that Tom had no well-defined plans, for he did, and after his breakfast he betrayed the fact that such was the case. There remained one boat in a badly damaged condition, and after having finished his breakfast Tom examined the boat, and said in a musing tone:

"I can repair that boat and make a good sailboat out of her."

He set to work, and thus a week passed, during which time he worked. He had some tools on board and at the end of a week had his boat completed, and had her slung over the side. By the aid of tackling and blocks he was able to adjust her in position just as he wanted her. He had enjoyed himself while at work. He had good living, slept well, and was hopeful, and the weather was good. Indeed he remarked: "Even if a storm should come up I'd only get a good tossing about; there is nothing to blow down, everything has already gone by the board or overboard, and the old brig is pretty solid and seaworthy yet despite the set-to she had with the waves."

For three weeks the old hulk drifted and Tom lost all reckoning as to where he was, but one morning he came on deck, and lo! he espied land. He had been at sea long enough to read the indications, and far off he espied cliffs rising, as it were, right out of the sea, and he exclaimed:

"Yes, it is as I expected, I am Tom the Explorer. I am all right; my day-dreams are to be fulfilled; I am drifting toward a fortune."

Many men and women have indulged day-dreams that are never verified, and then again there have been those who have had their dreams fulfilled. Tom had no right to assume that his dreams were to be fulfilled. The chances were that he was drifting toward an uninhabited island, or worse, an island inhabited by cannibals who would roast and eat him.

Tom did not overlook the possibility mentioned, and determined to be on his guard. He was all excitement, however. The sea was smooth, and he made preparations to land at once, or rather to explore. If everything was all right he would land, otherwise he would return to the hulk and drift until he struck some other landing place. He suspected that he was on a cluster of islands, and would at least find one where he could land. Little did he dream at the moment what wonderful events were to follow, or what a strange, weird discovery he was to make —a discovery which later on was destined to set the scientific men all over the world to speculating.

Tom lowered his boat after having provisioned her. Setting his sail he headed his little craft for the high bluffs which were at the moment distinctly visible. In about two hours he brought his boat around and sat gazing in amazement. He discovered that the island was not only inhabited, but had evidences that it was inhab-

ited by an intelligent people. While gazing he saw a canoe manned by a native making for him. Tom let his little boat drift. As there was only one man in the canoe he did not fear. No one native could eat him, especially as he was well armed and on his guard. The native had a broad sweep in his boat and soon came within speaking distance, and then he stopped rowing about fifty feet distant, and the two men sat and gazed at each other. Tom recognized that the native was a medium-sized man of a yellowish-brown complexion, and possessed of a rather good face for a sea-island native.

Tom was a great hand for studying, and while on board the brig he had earned the good will of an old sailor who had followed the sea all his life, and who had picked up a smattering of many languages, and Tom had learned a little of many dialects, not thoroughly but just a smattering—a few words here and there; and after he had gazed at the native a little while he spoke to him. The native shook his head, indicating that he did not understand. Tom tried several bits of language but all failed. After a little the native spoke and he used the Malaysian language, and fortunately Tom had picked up more of the latter lingo than any other, and he was able to make out the meaning of the few words spoken by the native. Discerning that the fellow was friendly he answered him in his own tongue and bade him come up to his boat. The native obeyed, and soon the two men shook hands in a friendly manner, reaching from their several boats, and our hero felt quite encouraged. He was invited to go ashore and consented, and he headed his boat for a cove, the native meantime acting as pacemaker. Across the smooth water Tom followed the native ashore. As Tom landed quite a number of the natives came down on the beach; they were a mild-mannered lot and every gesture

was one of friendliness—indeed, our young explorer, as he styled himself, had no fear whatever. He learned that the natives had seen the hulk drifting; they were on the lookout from a great bluff and they saw Tom launch his little boat and head for their island, and they had sent one of their number down to meet him. It was “just grand,” as the youth exclaimed in English. He was charmed with the appearance of the men and their gentle manners, and still he did not dream of the real discovery that he had made. He was a quick-witted fellow, alert and observant, and he was glad that he had picked up a little of the Malaysian language, as he knew with his quickness and observation he would soon pick up enough to converse with them quite freely.

The natives led our hero across the plain to their dwelling-place, and it was like a triumphal march. He was critically scrutinized by the members of the strange cavalcade. Tom saw a great deal to interest him; he observed that what little clothing they wore was made of woven grasses and the fiber of the cocoanut husks. He afterward learned that these grasses and the cocoanut husks are woven by the women on crude hand looms into a sort of coarse cloth.

Tom was led across the plain to the foot of a mountain, and he with his party began the ascent of the steep sides. The vegetation which he had noticed on the plain had disappeared, and he found himself walking over layer after layer of rock. In good season with his new friends he arrived at the top, where a view burst upon him that caused a thrill of admiration and delight. Stretched out before him was a broad table-land, probably three miles in extent, devoid of vegetation, and as level as though planed over by the hand of man, and what to him was most startling and wonderful was the discovery that over

this area was strewn masses of ruins in all stages of decay. These were the remains of buildings that had been once probably well constructed; and even evidences of crumbling walls. Far in the distance rose a huge pile which covered the extreme edge of the plateau and looked out majestically over a deep volcanic ravine that descended hundreds of feet below. Around this could be seen the ruins of structures in the last stages of decay.

Tom did not take in all we have indicated at one glance—indeed, we are anticipating the discoveries he made; but he saw decided evidences that there had once stood upon that plateau a great city. Our hero had read about the lost Atlantis, and concluded that the missing island had been located, that a great city of ancient times must have stood inland in the center of the Pacific and had been sunken by the caving in of the ocean's bottom, and then again thrown to the surface through the same influences; and he also thought that he had landed on the one corner which had been thrown once more above the waters.

It will not interest our readers to go into full details and descriptions, but the young man had certainly made a wonderful discovery, and one which when his experience should be revealed would make him world-famous.

CHAPTER IX.

PROMISE—A REVELATION—GOLD AT LAST—A CUNNING DEVICE
—A DEATH—A SHIP IN SIGHT—ON BOARD—THE HOME-
WARD VOYAGE—ONCE AGAIN IN NEW YORK.

As intimated, it is not pertinent to the main incidents of our narrative to describe all the wonders that fell under Tom's observations, but on every hand were

archæological remains of the most strange and suggestive character. There were the remains of buildings, images, of strange, weird mounds—indeed, he had come to an island of wonders, but at the moment he had deeper interests than their immediate study. Two facts were assured: he was among a friendly people; he would have enough to subsist upon in the way of food, and he would have as good shelter as though he were at home in his native Boston. These assurances were very gratifying, as the chances were that he might be compelled to live a long time among these people, and we really wish that we could record in detail his experiences, but in our short narrative we are not permitted to do so; that is, not in a Crusoe-like detail.

A few days passed and Tom amused himself going over the island and making studies, and he found that he was making rapid strides in acquiring the language. The man who had first come out to him became his especial chaperone and guardian. Our hero named the native Bot, because that was the way the good fellow pronounced the word boat, and Bot soon learned to answer to his name. Tom constructed a house—a one-room house of stone—and became quite a great man.

The women were singularly intelligent and wove for him a light overall robe, which he wore, giving him the appearance of a medicine man; but he found it a comfortable garment as the average temperature on the island ranged at eighty. He enjoyed himself hugely and found plenty of employment in making explorations of the ruins, intending if he ever did escape to write a book on the mysterious city of the sea, for later on, after his escape, he learned that the island was located twenty-five hundred miles straight out on the Pacific. He had sailed out to the hulk with Bot before the good brig drifted

away, and had secured a number of books and other articles which he believed might prove useful to him, and so the time passed. We again declare we wish we could furnish in detail his daily experiences during the two years and a half that he remained on the strange island, but there are other romantic incidents of a more personal character which we propose to recite, and can only skip over to a day when a most strange, weird, and really wonderful good fortune attended our brave young explorer.

Tom found buildings and he did hope to find gold, and that had been the one great impelling incentive which had urged him on to explore the ruins. He found many very curious objects, but no gold; he did, however, succeed in acquiring the language so that he could talk as freely with Bot as he could on an ordinary subject in his native tongue.

Tom had a piece of gold and he told Bot that he was looking for metal like that. Bot, as stated, was devoted to him, and Tom had taught the fellow English to a slight degree, and he had found the native an apt scholar, but whenever our hero alluded to the gold he observed that Bot changed the conversation and acted in a very strange manner, and it went on until Tom became convinced that there was some reason for good friend's avoidance of any conversation on the subject of the yellow metal. One day, however, after our hero had been on the island about two years and a half, he and Bot were sitting on the cliff overlooking the sea, when Tom said:

“Bot, if a ship should come some day to take me away, will you go with me?”

The native's face expressed his delight, and he was quick to announce his willingness to go. Tom had discovered that Bot possessed considerable original talent, and

under certain conditions he would have made quite an intelligent man. Tom told Bot that if he ever did succeed in leaving the island he would take him with him, and then Bot became quite thoughtful—indeed, he was thoughtful for two or three days, and one night at midnight he came to our hero's little stone house and made a most strange and wonderful disclosure. He told Tom that years ago, long before he was born, a vessel had come ashore on the island, and that many years afterward there had been found by one of his ancestors boxes filled with the yellow metal, and he told how the boxes had been hidden away and how no one among the present inhabitants on the island knew of their existence.

This statement almost took Tom's breath away, but he believed he could well see how some East Indiaman or Spanish galleon, or even some English vessel laden with gold, might have been dismantled as the brig had been, and how it might have drifted and drifted until finally it rolled in on to the shore of the island. Bot agreed that upon the following day he would take Tom to the place in a great cave where the gold was buried, and he added: "You can have it all, because you will take me to the great world across the the sea with you."

Tom did go with Bot and indeed the native's story proved true, and after all the dream of our hero's life to gain sudden riches was verified. He had ample leisure to count the gold, which was in bars of virgin metal, and a close estimate on values which he understood revealed to him the fact that he was the possessor of one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars. But, alas! he was on an island twenty-five hundred miles from the mainland, what good would the gold do him? He was hopeful, however, and often repeated: "Everything comes to him who waits." Tom had waited for his gold; it had come; he

could wait for the ship which would carry him away to the clime where his gold would be available.

A certain dream had lain down in our hero's mind, and in securing the gold in case of a final rescue he believed he could perceive the realization of this latter dream, so that all the dreams of his life would thus through strangest incidents be verified.

Having found the gold Tom prepared in a systematic manner to prepare for its removal, and he did so in a very cunning way. He collected all sorts of different articles which he could claim was an antiquarian collection, and in the most skillful manner he packed his gold so that the really valuable contents of the boxes and chests would not be suspected, and he looked forward afterward with great anxiety for the appearance of a ship; but before this wish was gratified a sad incident occurred. Bot sickened and died and was laid away to rest after the manner of the natives with his fathers, and one week following the death of poor faithful Bot a ship hove in sight, and a boat came ashore to investigate, and Tom was the first one to greet the boat's crew, and he took them to his house and entertained them, and in return was taken on board the ship, where he related his strange experiences to the captain, but said nothing about his gold, merely spoke of his collection of relics, and agreed to pay fair freight for the transport of his boxes. The captain agreed to carry the goods, for our hero had represented their great value, and offered to share with the captain the products of his collection after his arrival in the United States and the sale of them.

Again we must apologize to our readers for not going into full details, and merely state that in good time our hero's boxes were stowed away in the rescuing vessel, and practically forgotten by every one but their owner.

Tom was a passenger and enjoyed his time on board ship during the long weary months of the passage, and it was a year after his rescue from the island ere he once again set foot on his native soil under the old stars and stripes. But he got there and on the day he arrived he strolled up to Wall Street and disposed of enough gold, which he had kept in his personal baggage, for sufficient cash to pay all of his immediate expenses. He had his boxes transferred to a room he engaged for the purpose. He did not act hurriedly, but took a week to carry out his plans, and more than that, he bought out the captain's claim in the relics for ready cash, and there he was home again and the possessor of a large sum of money—indeed, he was rich.

In good time Tom disposed of his gold bars and deposited the money in the bank. He had been away for four years, but he felt that he had a large return for his years of absence. He kept his relics, for he did have some valuable relics and specimens to prove the wonderful story which some day he proposed to tell in a pamphlet, but in the meantime he proposed to rest and take full advantage of the wealth which had come to him in such a strange and remarkable manner.

On the island Tom had figured the value of his gold, but when he disposed of it and made his deposit he found that instead of being the possessor of one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars, as he had calculated, he was really the possessor of nearly double that sum.

Tom had developed into a very strong and vigorous man, and he was as good-looking a young fellow as one would meet with in a long day's walk. He was well content with himself, and strangely enough did not go to Boston, nor did he appear at all desirous of meeting Kate. He supposed she was married and happy, and he was

happy although not married. He secured bachelor quarters, furnished them handsomely, and had his curiosities at least a part of them, removed to his abode, and so a month passed, and during that month he was quite busy, but at the end of that time he felt that he had time to carry out a little scheme that he had in his mind.

One night he entered the reading-room of one of our large hotels. He was handsomely attired, wore heavy whiskers, and in no way outwardly resembled the strippling who four years previously had been incarcerated in a cell in the great city. As stated, he entered the reading-room of a large hotel, and was just about seating himself at a table to look over the papers when a hand was laid on his shoulder, and a man in a strong, familiar voice said:

"Hello, Tom Affleck, how do you do? Why, my lad, you look as fine as a fiddle; I'm glad to meet you."

CHAPTER X.

CONCLUSION.

Tom turned upon being thus addressed, and there came a look of delight to his face as he recognized his old-time friend and benefactor, Detective Murray. For an instant the young Crusoe could not speak, the meeting with his old friend brought back to him such a rush of memories and the detective was compelled to ask:

"Tom, don't you remember me?"

"I do."

"Who am I?"

"Murray, the detective, the good, kind man who did me such a great service over four years ago."

"I am the man you met over four years ago, but I do not know about the great service."

"I shall never forget the service; if it had not been for you the chances are I would have gone to State's prison; instead I've done better."

"Well, yes, you look as though you had done better than serving a term in jail."

"Oh, yes, and I am delighted to meet you—indeed, it was my delight that choked me, and I was unable to answer your salutation."

"I suppose you got enough of New York and returned to Boston?"

"Yes, I left New York, but I did not go to Boston."

"Out West?"

Tom hesitated a moment, and then said:

"Mr. Murray, I've a wonderful tale to tell you; I've out-Aladdined Aladdin."

"You have?"

"Yes."

"Made a fortune?"

"No, found one—yes, actually found one."

"And so you and Kate are married, I suppose."

"Did I tell you about Kate?"

"Oh, yes."

"Well, I am not married."

"Not married?"

"No."

"So you threw Kate over when you got rich, eh?"

As the detective spoke there came a slight clouding of his face.

"No, she threw me over before I went to sea."

"Oh, you've been to sea?"

"Yes, I will tell you all about it; but I was going to have a meal. Come and sit down with me and I will tell you all about it."

"I'll be glad to listen to your story. No doubt it is a great one."

"You have no idea of the strange story I am to tell."

Tom led the detective to the public dining-room in the restaurant of the hotel, and they sat down, and then in his usual straightforward and candid manner Tom told the story of his wonderful adventures.

It is needless to say that the detective listened with deep attention, and when the narrative was concluded he said:

"Tom, I've run across many very strange incidents in my career as a detective, but I must say that your experience beats anything I ever heard of or ran across as an actual experience."

"It's all true, and now I am in a position to reward you."

"You are very kind to think of me, Tom; yes, very kind, and if you will select some of those relics and turn them over to me, some that you can spare, I will be very grateful. I've a hankering after relics, but otherwise you can do nothing for me."

"You can do something for me."

"I'll do it, you bet."

"What ever became of Fred Goodman?"

"I lost sight of him, Tom, immediately after the affair that you know all about."

"And his sister?"

"I did hear that she returned to her home up in New Hampshire, and I've never seen anything of her since. She has probably married and settled down."

"And Merrit—what became of him?"

"Poor fellow! he went from bad to worse and died in a hospital. Rum had got too firm a grip for him ever to release himself, and he sank lower and lower until he

became a tramp, and, as I said, finally died in the hospital."

"And you say Miss Edith Goodman is married?"

"No, I did not state it as a fact, but it is possible, that is all. She was a beautiful girl and I reckon she is married and settled down long before this."

Tom appeared to accept the conclusion as a fact, and after several very pleasant hours with Murray he went to his rooms, and what his reflections were in view of what subsequently occurred we will not attempt to determine. Our hero was content to live on and enjoy himself for some few days, but strangely, he never thought of returning to Boston. He had no relatives there that he knew of, and for some reason did not appear to care about visiting the scenes of his early boyhood.

One night Tom was passing along the street when he saw a number of men come forth from a cheap eating house. The men were seafaring men, and as the light flashed on the face of one of them Tom uttered a sudden cry of amazement, and at once running forward seized hold of the man who had attracted his attention, and demanded:

"Is your name Goodman?"

"That is my name, stranger, but if you are set to play any fine points on me you make a mistake; I've been in New York before."

"You are Fred Goodman?"

"That is my name."

"You do not remember me?"

"I do not."

"Come along with me and I will tell you who I am."

"Beg your pardon, shipmate, but I do not go with strangers."

"I am not a stranger."

“You are to me.”

“No, old fellow, I am Tom Affleck, and you and I were said to resemble each other.”

The sailor glanced a moment in astonishment, and then exclaimed:

“Are you really Tom Affleck?”

“Yes, I am.”

“I never would have recognized you.”

“I am Tom Affleck, all the same, and I want you to come with me.”

Fred Goodman’s companions had waited for him a little way off, but Fred called out “Good-day” to them, and turning to our hero said:

“I’ll go with you—yes, I am glad to meet you.”

Tom led the young man to his bachelor apartments, and giving him a cigar said:

“Sit down, Fred, I’ve a great deal to tell you, and some questions to ask.”

“Go ahead, my best of friends, for I so have always considered you.”

“What has befallen you since we met last over four years ago?”

“It is a tale easily told: I lost my situation, my sister returned home to New Hampshire, and I went to sea.”

“What luck did you have at sea?”

“A sailor’s usual luck.”

“And how are you off to-day as concerns money matters?”

“I haven’t a cent. My small pay for awhile I sent to my parents until they died, and since then I’ve spent my money — I went along, as my sister Edith has a position — typewriter in Boston, and is well able to care for herself.”

“When did you hear from your sister last?”

"About a year ago, when I was last in port. I did not write her on my return this time."

"Why not?"

"I had no good news to impart, and I put it off."

"Isn't she worried about you?"

"No."

"How is that?"

"She does not know I am in port."

"And do you mean to tell her?"

"I haven't decided."

"And you are 'dead broke' as far as money is concerned?"

"Yes."

"I've a favor to ask."

"I'll grant any favor you may ask if it is in my power."

"I have got to go out of town for a few days; I want you to occupy my rooms here until I return."

"What! live in these elegant rooms?"

"Yes."

"In my sailor togs?"

"I am going to advance you money to buy good clothes."

"You are?"

"Yes."

"Advance me money for what?"

"I may take you on a voyage with me."

"Take me on a voyage with you?"

"Yes."

"I don't understand."

"I've been to sea."

"You have?"

"Yes, and I've had good luck. I don't want to tell you any more at present, but I've got to go away, and I

want you to stay here until I come back. Let me ask you a question: do you drink?"

"Not much; once in awhile I've taken a drink on ship-board, never ashore."

"That's lucky for you, and I may say for me. You will stay with me to-night, and to-morrow I will talk over our arrangements for the future."

"Why should you take such an interest in me?"

"Because I like you. We met first under very peculiar circumstances; you were kind to me and I believe you to be a first-class honest fellow. We were once thrown together under very singular circumstances, and I've often thought about you. I'll never forget what a great stand you took for poor Merrit—and good square friends are so rare in this world. I've an idea I'd like to make you my friend."

"I am your friend already."

The two young men talked for a long time, and on the following day it was all arranged that Fred should remain and occupy our hero's rooms until the latter returned from his trip. Tom felt that he could trust his friend, and had good reasons for all that he did.

Tom had indulged for years one long hope, and then again he had been compelled to banish that hope. He had made the mistake of assuming too much—a mistake that is too often made through various incidents in life. He had assumed that so beautiful a girl as Edith must be married, and all his fond dreamings while on the island and during his return to his native land were dispelled by that one remark of Murray, the detective. "She is married as a matter of course by this time. Such a lovely girl as Edith Goodman would not be permitted to remain unsought." Tom had dismissed all thought of the beautiful girl from his mind, but when he met and

talked to Fred his heart bounded with delight. There did remain a possibility that he had judged wrongly.

On the evening following his talk with Fred, and after seeing the latter transmogrified from a sailor into a gentleman once more, Tom took the Fall River line for Boston. He did not reveal to his friend his destination, but merely said:

“If I am detained I will write to you.”

On the trip Tom indulged very pleasant imaginings and anticipations, and as he passed a mirror in the main saloon and appreciated what a really fine-looking chap he was, he gloried in it for reasons which must be patent to our readers.

In due time our hero arrived in Boston, and he commenced a search for the office where Edith was employed. He had adroitly got the information he needed from Fred, and he called at the office and boldly inquired for Miss Goodman, only to learn that she had resigned her position six months previously, and her late employer did not know where she was, but suspected that she had returned to her native town and possibly was married. Here again Tom received a terrible blow, and he muttered:

“Hang it! after all I am to be disappointed,” but this time he was determined not to act on assumption. He was determined to make sure, and we would advise all our readers to always make sure concerning anything that may affect their future.

It was night when Tom arrived in the New Hampshire town. He made inquiries about Miss Goodman from the wife of the owner of the tavern in the town, who appeared to be a very pleasant lady—indeed, he took this lady in his confidence, and told her that he brought news to Edith from her brother, who was his friend, and who had asked him to see his sister as he was going East.

"I trust," said the lady, "that you bring her good news from her brother."

"Why, madam?"

"I fear the girl is to meet with a great disappointment to-night."

"A great disappointment?"

"Yes."

"How?"

"Last year she taught the district school and is a candidate this year, but there is a rival against her and it is claimed that the rival has the best chance. The matter is to be settled to-night. You can go to the school and see her there."

Tom proceeded to the school, walked in where the selectmen were holding their meeting, and there he beheld Edith, looking as lovely as ever save that anxiety gave her a wan look, but the beauty of her eyes and features was there. He arrived at a critical moment; the decision had just been made: it was in favor of the opposing candidate, and with tears in her eyes Edith started for her home. Tom followed her out, and when a few yards from the schoolhouse he approached and accosted her.

"Good-evening, Miss Goodman."

The girl turned and faced him, and he said:

"You do not recall my face?"

"Not in the darkness."

"We are old friends, and I bring you news from your brother Fred."

Edith exclaimed:

"Oh, I am so glad to hear from Fred; is he well?"

"Yes, very well."

"I'm so glad; I was worried that I did not hear from him. Will you deliver the letter, please?"

"I have no letter; I bring a verbal message only, but we will proceed to your home and I will tell you all about it."

Edith suddenly clapped her hands to her head, and starting back exclaimed:

"Is this Mr. Affleck?"

"Yes, I am Tom Affleck."

"I recognized your voice."

"You did?"

"Yes."

"I feared you would not recognize me from my appearance."

"Oh, yes, I would recognize you *anywhere and under any circumstances.*"

This declaration came as a revelation to our hero, and his heart thumped and thumped.

"Let us go to your home," he said in a voice broken by emotion.

Edith and Tom did go to the former's humble home, and adroitly Tom withheld all allusion to his own fortunes until Edith had with tears related her disappointment, and she murmured:

"Now I do not know what I will do."

"I do," said Tom, seizing upon the moment to tell his secret in a most novel manner.

"You know what I will do?"

"Yes."

"Tell me."

"I am rich, I have met with great success. You will become my wife and let the school and noisy children go to thunder—that is, go home."

Edith trembled and blushed. The sentiment was not new to either of them, for it was afterward learned that they had loved each other a long time.

"Do not answer me, Edith, until I have told my story," said Tom.

"Oh, I know you have a great story to tell," said Edith, her face all aglow.

Tom told his wonderful story, and never did a girl listen with more intense interest than did Edith to the wonderful tale our hero had to tell. She asked him all manner of questions until Tom, with a quizzical look upon his face, said:

"You are asking me so many questions, you do not give me a chance."

"Give you a chance?"

"Yes."

"But you have not told me about the looms with which those island women made the cloth out of grasses."

"No, and I don't mean to tell you until you answer a question for me."

"Oh, dear, your story is so interesting."

"Yes, but there is something which is of greater interest to me, and I hope to you. Remember, you encountered a great disappointment to-night. Do not cause me one also."

"How can I disappoint you?"

"Can't you guess?"

"Hardly."

Edith looked charming as she said "hardly," and Tom said:

"Then I'll tell you. I love you, I've thought about you all these years; your image has been in my mind night and day. Will you become my wife?"

Edith became serious at once, and asked:

"Are you willing to marry the false girl who once betrayed you?"

"Yes, I am; and if she will become my wife she will

Save me a disappointment, and I believe soften down her own; for, Edith, I've got all that gold can buy; I am rich."

"Tom, if you are willing to marry the girl who betrayed you, I am willing to marry the man whom I betrayed." Edith looked Tom square in the face with her beautiful eyes, as she added: "On one condition."

"Name the condition."

"That you will believe me when I say I would have married you had you asked me to do so if you had come to me as poor as you were the day you landed in New York over four years ago."

"Dearest, I am delighted to hear you say that, and I do believe you."

"On your honor?"

"Yes."

"Then, Tom, if you want me I will become your wife."

A few days later Fred received a letter bidding him to his native town. The letter was written by Edith, and in it the secret was revealed that she had promised to marry Tom Affleck.

Fred could not wait to tell his satisfaction, but just telegraphed:

"Bully." Signed, "Fred."

Fred arrived in his native town, and then for the first time listened to the wonderful tale of his prospective brother-in-law's adventures, and some three months later the marriage followed, and Fred and Tom later entered into business together as bankers and brokers, Fred having served in a banker's office and having great aptness for the business.

Dear readers, our narrative would end right here if it were not that we have one little incident to relate. Mr. Affleck, the banker, and his wife, went to a summer hotel

some few years following his marriage, and it is needless to say that the handsome couple attracted considerable fashionable attention. At the same hotel was a Mrs. Small, with two children and a paralytic husband, and as this Mrs. Small looked upon Tom and his wife there arose in her heart a bitter regret when she recalled how she had sacrificed the splendid Tom Affleck for the miserable specimen of a man she called her husband, a man who did have money, for he was the whilom bachelor for whom Kate had turned Tom adrift, and he proved a "measley" sort of husband at heart. He had made his wife's life miserable and he was miserable himself, having nothing but his money and ailments. Tom met Kate as an old friend, and he felt no regrets at the past when he looked on the face of his lovely wife, and beheld for what he had been "turned down."

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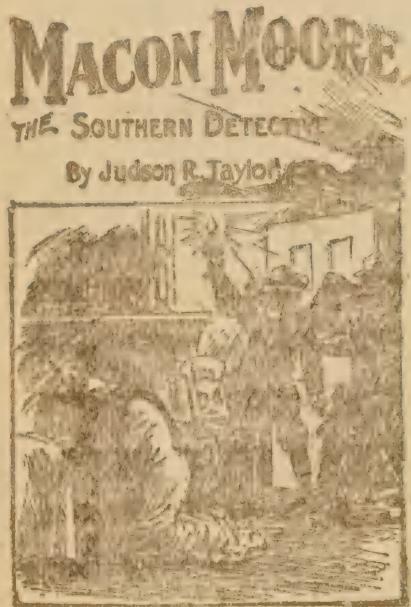
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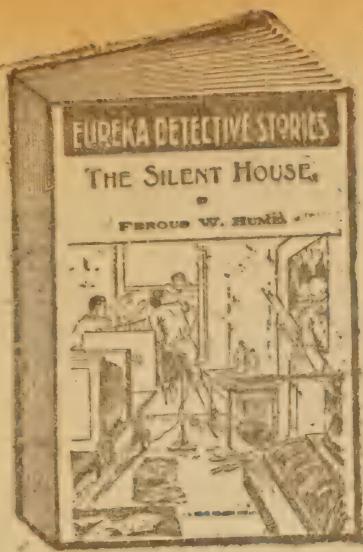
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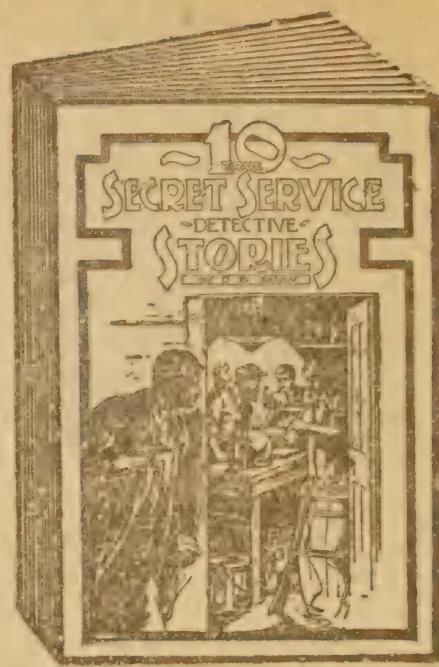
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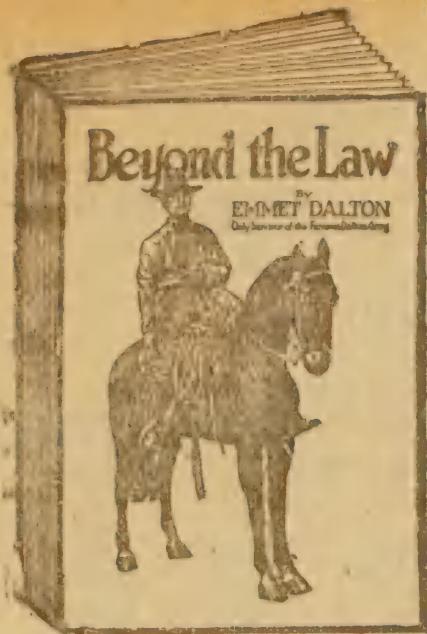
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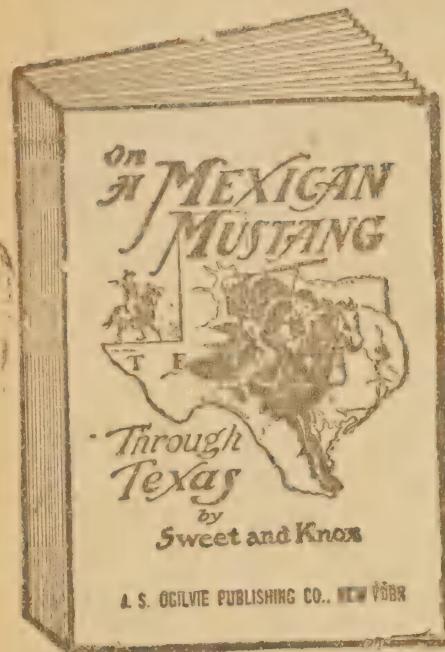
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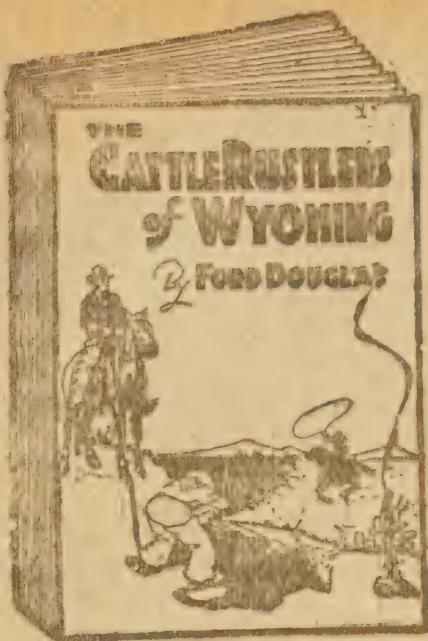
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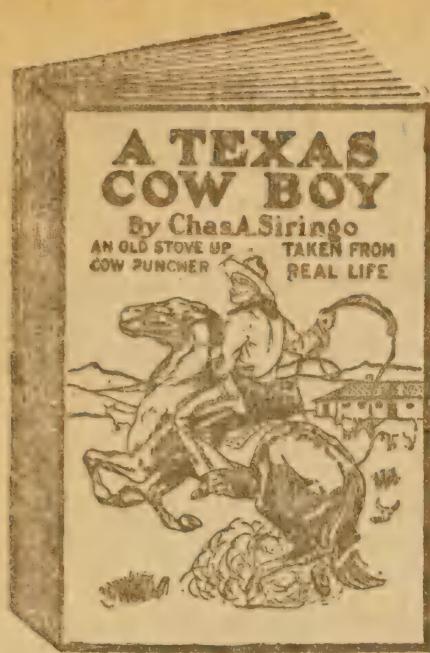
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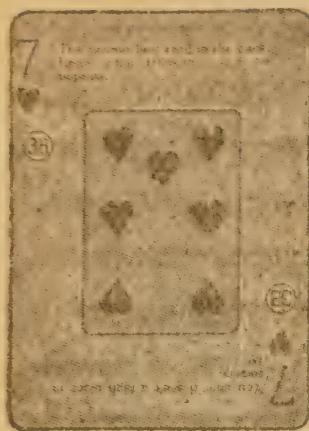
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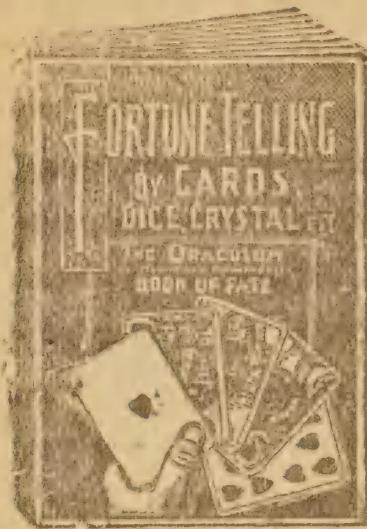
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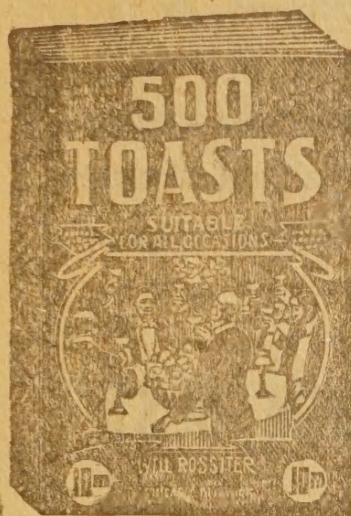
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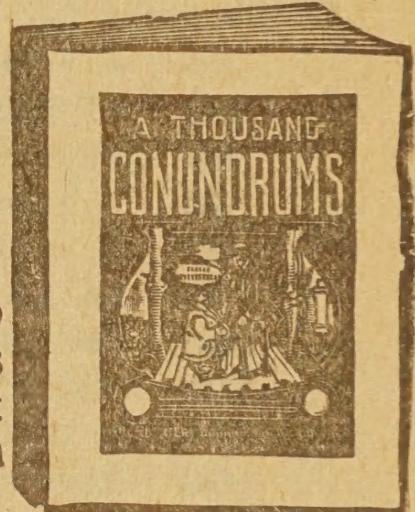
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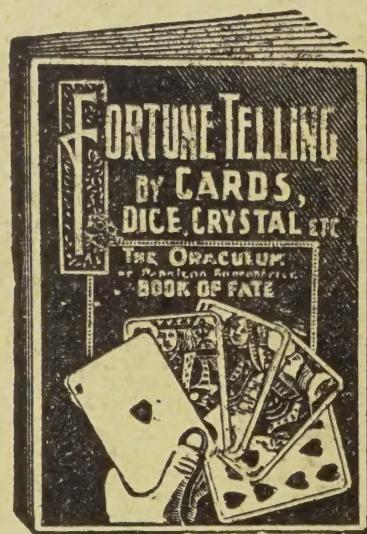
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